



JAPAN CHRISTIAN ACTIVITY NEWS

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NEW ENERGY EVIDENT IN NCC GENERAL ASSEMBLY

There was a new look to the old NCC as it met in General Assembly at Amagi Sanso March 10-12. Just as the old wooden buildings of the famous Baptist retreat center are giving way to a substantial new concrete building, so the Assembly showed a new kind of intent and responsibility in its approach to the content and resources involved in working together.

Among the 100 persons present from six member churches, eight Christian organizations (YMCA, YWCA, Christian Medical Association, Japan Bible Society, etc.) plus associate members and guests, were many new faces along with those of veterans in the NCC movement, like 87-year-old Rev. Ochimi Kubushiro of the WCTU. The Baptist Union, Lutherans and YMCA and YWCA particularly responded to the request to send new people, and the new people brought new questions and demands.

Rev. Masaaki Nakajima, whose appointment as general secretary was confirmed, noted that despite the polarization that exists, there is a potential dynamic energy, and it could be felt at many points in the conference.

Bishop Makoto Goto, Japan Episcopal Church, was elected to lead the NCC for the next three years, succeeding Dr. Isamu Omura. Elected as vice chairmen were Dr. Takaaki Aikawa, Japan Baptist Union, and Rev. Kiyoshi Ii, United Church of Christ in Japan. Rev. Yoshikazu Miura, Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church, and Dr. In Ha Lee, Korean Christian Church in Japan, were named as secretaries, Lee for a second term. Dr. Aikawa is the first layman to be elected an officer.

Self-reliance Issue

Financial self-reliance emerged as a major issue early in the Assembly, when the report of a group headed by Sueo Kitahara, Baptist Remmei was read, calling for the executive committee to present to the next Assembly, in 1973, plans for the Council to become self-supporting. While that statement was ruled out of order, the issue reappeared on the last day in the form of a bill from the committee on motion, which was passed unanimously.

In the discussion of it, most speakers supported the proposal wholeheartedly. "This will prove whether we really want to do things together," said one. Another declared the step of self-support is a (Please turn to page 6.)

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CHRISTIAN PAVILION DEDICATED

The Christian Pavilion, an effort to challenge both the materialistic view of peace and progress, and the history of a divided Christianity, was dedicated Thursday, March 5, in services at the Pavilion site amid the whirling dirvishes and vaulting pylons of the Osaka Expo '70.

Taking part in the service, the first instance of ecumenical participation in a world exposition, were representatives of Christian bodies in Japan and abroad, including Episcopal Bishop Hinsuke Yashiro, chairman of the Pavilion Central Committee, Dr. Isamu Omura, chairman, the National Christian Council, Roman Catholic Bishop Yoshigoro Taguchi, and Archbishop Bruno Wusterberg, Apostolic Nunciature. Rev. Yasuji Ichikawa, Osaka Church of the United Church of Christ in Japan, presided. Greetings were brought by representatives of Expo '70, national and local governments, and overseas supporters.

The Pavilion is a low, bronze-capped structure of wood and concrete, amid the profusion of odd shapes and many highly elaborate exhibitions of more than ninety countries, states and organizations. The visitor enters the Christian Pavilion through a catacomb-like passage designed to separate him from the cacophony and confusion of the fair. Through the media of photography, art, music and drama, he is encouraged to reflect upon the state of contemporary man and upon his own life. Ascending the stairs, he enters the light-wood lathed, sky-lighted central hall, Architect Akira Inadomi's expression of Holy Emptiness.

Prof. Kazo Kitamori, chairman of the Pavilion Theme Committee, spoke of the Committee's decision to express the Christian message in forms appropriate to the Expo setting, with indirect methods of communication rather than the direct approach common within the church. He pointed out the three symbolic foci of the central hall--the Bible as the Word of God, the Communion Table as symbolic of the Presence of Christ, the pipe organ, expressive of man's joyous response to the Word and Presence.

Hiroo Sakata, on behalf of the producers, described programs to be performed in the hall--competitions for organists and composers, a series of concerts and plays, opportunities for informal face-to-face participation by small groups.

Archbishop Wusterberg summarized the feelings of many toward the ecumenical venture when he said, "We have suffered together, we have dialogued together, but we have also succeeded together." He paid recognition to the furor raised by a group of young students, pastors and laymen within the United Church over the Christian Pavilion when he said, "This small Pavilion among the many exhibitions showing industrial progress is in a way a contradiction." Yet, he continued "it is a sign of the eternal truth that bread alone does not fulfill man's life."

Expo '70 opens officially Saturday, March 14. Some 51 million persons are expected to attend during the six months of the fair. Among the exhibitions, a number of new African nations and South East Asian countries are colorfully represented.

KYODAN ELECTS NEW VICE MODERATOR

Rev. Mitsuho Yoshida, 52, of Kochi, Shikoku, was elected vice moderator of the United Church of Christ in a standing committee held Feb. 24-26, that seemed to put the storm-battered Kyodan back on even keel.

Prior to this meeting the members meeting privately at their own expense had moved toward a consensus on the position that, in the present situation, officers and staff could best "take responsibility" for the Kyodan dilemma by not resigning. Rather than resigning, they felt it to be their responsibility in the present crisis to continue until the Regular Assembly in October when a new slate could be elected.

The new vice moderator, a graduate of Tokyo Theological Seminary (predecessor to Tokyo Union Theological Seminary), is known to be somewhat more conservative than the present administration. He is also the first non-Tokyo man to be elected as an officer. Commenting on his election, General Secretary Toru Takakura said, "To have a man of his convictions as one of the officers may be a very good thing, helping to bring into the executive leadership a faithful representation of the different opinion within the Kyodan." Yoshida was moderator of Shikoku district 1963-66.

In time set aside for reports of the impasse between Tokyo Union Seminary faculty and the radical group of students (who recently won control of the student government body by popular vote) as well as of the impasse between the Seminary administration and the Kyodan, only the striking student representatives were heard. Pro-Faculty students present were too small in number to get a hearing, and no representatives of the faculty appeared. The people present agreed to ask the Seminary to call a meeting of the total Board of Directors, which has not met since June, 1969.

JAPAN'S OLDEST MISSIONARY DIES

Dr. J.M.T. Winther died March 2, in Kobe, at the age of 95. Coming to Japan first in 1898, as a missionary of the United Danish Lutheran Church, Dr. Winther was bound for China but disembarked in Yokohama to await additional funds. He decided God was calling him to remain in Japan, and remain he did, his fiance coming from Denmark to marry him here. He carried on a ministry of teaching and preaching in Kyushu, Kurume and Kobe related to the Japan Evangelical Lutheran Church. In recent years he has maintained associations with the Kobe Lutheran Theological Seminary.

IMMIGRATION BILL TO BE FURTHER DISCUSSED

"Why the discrimination?" asks a handbill inviting people to a discussion of the proposed new bill relating to the immigration and residence of foreigners in Japan, to be held at the Fujin Kyofu Kaikan, at 2:30 Sunday afternoon, March 22.

Although the bill apparently is being held up because the government party wishes to avoid trouble in the face of increasing trade relations with China and the extension of the Japan-U.S. Mutual Security Treaty, there is a feeling that it is necessary to be thoroughly aware of the implications of the bill, as well as the reason for the discrimination, which it is felt is directed toward, or would be felt most deeply, by Koreans living in Japan.

The speakers will be:

Masao Ono	lawyer, Japan Civil Liberties Union
Kim Sam Kyu	chief editor, <u>Korea Review</u>

Sponsors of the meeting are the Korean Christian Church in Japan and the Committee on Social Concerns of the United Church of Christ, with the cooperation of the NCC Committee on Minority Problems.

The Fujin Kyofu Kaikan is located near Okubo Station of the Chuo Line.

ASIAN LEADERSHIP DEVELOPMENT CENTER INAUGURATED AT TOZANSO

With the explosion of higher education and the complex variety of university situations in Asia calling for many different forms of Christian community and ministry, the World Student Christian Federation is inaugurating an Asian Leadership Development Center (ALDEC) at Tozanso, the YMCA study center outside Tokyo.

The first program will open April 10, under the direction of Kentaro Shiozuki, of the WSCF Asia office staff, with 25-30 persons attending from throughout Asia for intensive study, discussion, research and practical experience in gaining a new understanding of the leadership demanded in Asia today.

Resident resource persons on the staff of the Center this year will be Prof. Saral Chatterji of India and Feliciano Carino of the Philippines, presently in student work with the United Presbyterian Church in the U.S.A.

Prof. Chatterji, who is associated with Xavier College, Calcutta, and the Christian Institution for the Study of Religion and Society, Bangalore, will deal with social and political issues, especially in relation to development, while Mr. Carino will give major attention to theological issues and the point at which these intersect social and political concerns.

PREPARATION-FOR-MARRIAGE COURSE FOR YOUNG AND OLD

"This is a course for young people contemplating marriage, but it is also for pastors and older people responsible for guiding young people," said Rev. Shinji Iwamura, chairman of the NCC Home and Family Life Committee, in announcing the 1970 series of lectures on Preparation for Marriage, to be held on four successive Monday nights in April.

"The aim of the course is to give young people considering marriage the right kind of knowledge, understanding and beliefs about matrimony according to the Christian faith, in the context of the present social situation," he said. But he also encouraged others to participate saying, "Persons in a position to guide young people are frequently quite ignorant and indifferent about these matters."

The course will meet Monday night from 6:30 to 8:30, April 6 through April 27, at Aogaku Kaikan, adjacent to Aoyama Gakuin in Shibuya. Inquiries may be addressed to the NCC offices. The cost is ¥150 per lecture or ¥500 for the series.

STUDY TOUR OF EUROPEAN AUDIO-VISUAL TECHNIQUES

As its first project, the newly organized Shichokaku Kagaku Gijitsu Kaihatsu Center (center for the development of scientific techniques in audio-visuals) is sponsoring a 22-day study tour of eight European countries May 16-June 6. The itinerary includes visits to exhibitions, education programs and major producers of audio-visuals. At Basel, Switzerland, the tour will attend DIDACTA 70, the 10th European Exhibition of Education Materials.

The tour is planned for persons in charge of audio-visuals in high schools, universities, businesses and libraries. Cost of travel and accommodations, exclusive of exhibition admissions, is ¥585,200 (approximately \$1600).

Chairman of the Center is Shigeyoshi Matsumae, president, Tokai University. The 15 members of the Board of Trustees will include Christians and non-Christians, with several members of the Board of Trustees of AVACO, the NCC Commission on Audio-Visuals, serving on the board of the Center also. At the present time it is located in the AVACO offices in Shibuya.

JAPANESE CHRISTIAN IMMIGRANTS IN BRAZIL TO VISIT JAPAN

A group of twenty-five Japanese Christian immigrants to Brazil will return to their motherland to visit Expo '70, family and friends during April, according to correspondence addressed to Dr. Isamu Omura, NCC chairman, by Rev. Shigeru Abe, chairman of the Japanese Christian Church Federation in Brazil. The tour is being led by Mr. Abe and Rev. Sukaichi Ono.

Following its arrival by plane in Tokyo April 8, the party will meet with Tokyo residents who have visited Brazil at Yodobashi Church, Shinjuku. Proceeding to the Kansai, they will visit Kyoto, Osaka and Nara before dispersing to assume individual itineraries.

"SALVATION TODAY" THEME SEEN IN JAPANESE SITUATION

In its new issue Vol. 6, No. 2, Japanese Religions presents English papers intended to contribute to the study project, "Salvation Today," of the World Council of Churches. The contents are:

"Buddhism in the West," by Ernst Benz

"The Soteriology of New Religions," by Sugai Taika

"Soteriology in Shinto," by Sekioka Kazushige

"'Salvation' for Modern Japanese Humanists," by Yashiro Takashi

Japanese Religions is published by the NCC Center for the Study of Japanese Religions, c/o Kyoto Diocese, Japan Episcopal Church, Karasuma-Shimotachiuri, Kamikyo-ku, Kyoto, Japan 602. The price for four issues, published over a period of two years, is ¥1,000, or \$3.50 overseas.

NEW THEOLOGY JOURNAL RECEIVED

"Towards a Theology of Indigenization" is the theme of the new issue of The Northeast Asia Journal of Theology (just received, although dated Sept. 1969). Among other topics dealt with are Buddhist thought in contemporary Japan, mediation in cultural interaction, the Contemporary Christ. The rate for two issues a year is ¥800 (\$5 in U.S. or Canada). Orders may be placed through Rev. Masatoshi Korogi, NCC, Christian Center, 5-1 Ginza 4-chome, Chuo-ku, Tokyo 104.

THIRD GRADERS SEND GIFT

The Inter-church Aid and Service Department of NCC received the following communication recently:

To the Biafra Campaign:

We talked about Biafra in our class. After reading the newspaper we felt sorry that the people there were having so much trouble. We knew how bad we would feel if the same thing happened to us here in Japan.

At first everyone in the class had lots of different ideas, but finally we all agreed on what to do. So we all brought our money to help. ¥4,500* isn't much, but we gave all we could. We hope you'll take it to the people in Biafra.

We all hope the war and trouble in Biafra will stop soon.

Keiko Ideguchi and Naoko Urashima
Class 2, 3rd grade
Johoku Elementary School, Yokosuka

* \$12.50

NCC Assembly (continued from page 1)

prerequisite to giving help to other parts of Asia. When it was suggested that certain activities might be curtailed due to reduced support, a vigorous proponent said, "We will have to study what is most important and support that." Secretary Lee cautioned consideration for staff who might be victims of too quick and irresponsible discontinuance of overseas aid.

Potter Speaks

The greatest specific challenge to mission came from Dr. Philip A. Potter, director of the WCC's Division of World Mission and Evangelism, who spoke on "Salvation Today," theme of the DWME 1972 meeting. He defined Salvation, in its Biblical usage, as meaning "wide and spacious," "to deliver, to liberate persons for freedom from all that confines or enslaves them."

Potter said he had a special interest in Japan because "it is the one country that has totally denied Christianity." After identifying the source of the present dichotomy between social and individual Salvation as being the Greek mystery religions, Potter said, "While this dichotomy is explainable in terms of Western history, why is there popular debate on it in Japan, which has always seen the individual in relation to society? Has Japan been seduced by Western theology?" Urging Christians to talk with, not to, persons of other faiths, he asked, "Why have Japanese Christians not gone forward into dialog with other religions?" His questions, for the most part, were neither answered nor argued.

Strong support was given to the formation of regional and local councils. It was voted to study providing budget to encourage grass root endeavors and changes in the Constitution to link national, regional and local councils.

In usually routinized committee and division reports, youth sought concrete action in place of phraseology like "reconciliation" and "fellowship," while seasoned delegates worked to untangle unwieldy budget procedures. Showing an increased sense of the NCC as their instrument of ecumenicity, they asked for a revision of procedures so that, rather than seeking support for a budget projected three years ahead, members would commit budget proposals year by year to their general assemblies for action.

Young power had its say when a red-sweatered YMCA delegate, Tsutomu Oniki, who was present and involved throughout the Assembly, rose on the last day to accuse the general secretaries of failing to report fully the Christian Pavilion turmoil. "One purpose of the NCC is to provide a place for us to listen to one another's problems," he said. "But nothing has been said here about the Pavilion or Tokyo Union Seminary. We are not dealing with our real problems."

Baptist Remmei General Secretary Yoshikazu Nakajima proposed the annulment of the 1968 NCC action to sponsor the Pavilion, but it did not get the vote necessary to make it a bill to be voted on. Bishop Goto then called for an open discussion in the closing three-quarters of an hour. Baptist and other critics said there had been insufficient investigation of Expo '70 sponsorship, that the Vatican had been added as a partner after the original decision between the Japan Catholic Church and the NCC, and that such a building project was contrary to the NCC Constitution. A call to extend the hour of adjournment was defeated, but it was agreed to set a time for further discussion of the issue.

Encouraged, as many people were, by the heated participation in work group discussions, Nakajima sounded the positive approach toward confrontation today when he said, "The more severe the discussion, the better it will be for the NCC."

(Reports of plans for the various Divisions--Mission, Education and Service--will be carried in the next issue of JCAN.)